

March 8, 2010 CORRECTED

Legislative Update 2010



Iowa Department of Human Services

Special points of interest:

- * Supplemental Signed
- * Child Abuse Up in 2009
- * Dental Care for Kids
- * Count Foster Kids in Census
- * Thank You Notes

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DHS Director's Column: "DHS delivers real change to peoples lives"

No formal action was taken by the Legislature this week on the Health and Human Services Budget but a lot of informal discussions were taking place. Expect the actual budget bill to be passed out of the Human Services Budget Subcommittee on Tuesday March 9th with possible action by House Appropriations later in the week. March 11th is the date for the Revenue Estimating Conference to make their estimates and this may have an impact on the rest of the Session as legislators strive to craft budgets that comply with state law on spending limitations. I've been talking with legislators and inter-

est groups all week about the impact on services to vulnerable lowans if the current budget figures remain in place. In any discussions, we have to emphasize the impact on the lowans we serve. Legislators need to understand the practical, personal impacts of the work you do. We have to be careful not to get lost in a discussion of money and FTEs and lose sight of the real changes in people's lives that DHS delivers every day. It takes DHS employees to deliver services.

—Charlie Krogmeier



The DHS Supplemental, SF 2151 was signed by the Governor on March 3rd.

Child Abuse Increased in 2009

Last week DHS released annual figures regarding the number of child abuse investigations and findings of abuse and neglect. The sobering analysis showed an increase of 11% in both areas. Director Krogmeier attributed the increase in part to the state of the economy and heightened awareness. In calendar year 2009 DHS conducted 25,814 assessments. 10,

148 children were involved in the founded abuse cases. "Denial of critical care" otherwise known as neglect continues to make up the majority, 81%, of the founded cases. The encouraging news in the report is that nearly 92% of the abused or neglected children remained abuse-free in the following six months. That means that DHS is doing a good

job of preventing re-abuse and stepping in to help, not to punish, the family with needed supports. Krogmeier expects continued progress in keeping Iowa children safe.

Did you know?

DHS is updating its Hawk-i application to make it more user-friendly and more clear that families need to notify DHS if they get other health insurance. Federal law requires that money paid for children who are not eligible must be repaid to the federal government so it is important for families to notify DHS of any changes.

Governor Announces First-Dental Only Plan for Kids

"Ensuring our children have access to quality, affordable health care is a top priority of my administration" said Governor Culver. "I am proud to announce this dental-only option as a major step toward getting kids the coverage they not only need, but deserve. We are once again showing why Iowa is a leader in helping hard-working

families by providing health care." The program is open to children in families whose income would qualify for the Health and Well Kids in Iowa (hawk-i) program and who have health insurance that does not include dental care. The National Academy for State Health Policy has declared tooth decay to be the most common chronic

childhood disease in America. "it's almost entirely preventable if caught early, and Iowa is now offering a change for more parents to do just that", said DHS Director Charlie Krogmeier. (Article based on Governor's Press Release of March 5, 2010.)

US Census: Counting Kids in Foster Care

Guidance from the US Census office states that "people should be counted where they live and sleep most of the year". Furthermore, US Census defines foster children as "children receiving paren-

tal care and guidance although not related through blood or legal ties; placed in care by a government agency. With this in mind, DHS is advising foster parents to check the box "non-relative" on the census

form. This will include foster children but will preserve their confidentiality rights by not identifying them specifically as foster children.

Upcoming Events

March 5th—2nd Funnel
Deadline

March 11th—Revenue Esti-
mating Conference Meets

March 31st—Scheduled
Final Day of 2010 Session

***Schedule subject to change**



DHS Files Report on Children's Mental Health System in Iowa

The goal of care provided to Iowa's mentally ill youth is that services and supports will be family-drive, child-focused and community-based in the least restrictive, most appropriate setting for the child and family. In addition, Iowa's children and youth should receive treatment

services and support where they live, work and learn, so that they can remain with their families and in their communities—without the unnecessary involvement of the child welfare or juvenile court system or other out of home options. Are these goals being met? A new

report paints a picture of some progress with a great deal of work still be done. You can read the entire report at the DHS website.

Disaster Aid Vouchers May Be An Option

Senate Rebuild Iowa Committee this week passed HF 2294 which allows for disbursement of disaster aid through a voucher system in addition to the current method of direct reimbursement to households based on actual costs documented by receipts. This change in law will provide an option for those who

cannot afford to pay for disaster-related repairs and then be reimbursed later. DHS is directed to develop the voucher system then work with local Long-term Recovery Committees or local emergency management to establish voucher agreements with local vendors to provide a network to respond

quickly to the needs of low-income families during disasters.



View the Budget Materials

Iowa General Assembly
Website:

www.legis.state.ia.us

Go to "Committees"

Click on "Health and Human
Services Budget Subcom-
mittee"

Click on "Additional Infor-
mation"

See 2/25/10 DHS Budget
Impact for the DHS Reac-
tion to the Legislative Tar-
gets

See 2/24/10 FY 2011 Gen-
eral Fund Committee Recs
for the Legislature's Budget
Targets

IowaCare Bill Narrows in Scope

The Iowa Senate passed IowaCare Expansion, SF 2356, in a narrowed down version this week. The bill was amended by the Senate to create an interim committee to study the cost to increase coverage to individuals age 19-64 with incomes at 200-300% of the federal poverty level rather than expand coverage at this time. The bill continues efforts to expand the regional provider network to

allow Iowans to receive primary care closer to home, establishes the Iowa Choice Exchange as an information clearinghouse to make it easier for Iowans to compare insurance plans and provides some additional reimbursement assistance to rural hospitals. The House Human Resources took action on the bill last week also and therefore it remains eligible for debate after the second funnel dead-

line. Representative Mark Smith (D-Marshalltown) promised to continue bi-partisan efforts on the bill and health care reform in general.



Thank You Notes from Legislators

Session can be a challenging time with large workloads, short deadlines, long hours, bill reviews, fiscal notes and requests for information.

It is nice to hear from legislators who are grateful for our efforts. Here is a sampling of recent thank you notes from our legislative partners.

Thank you for the information. --Representative Phyllis Thede House District 81

This information was exactly what I was looking for. Thanks for your prompt response.

—Representative Tyler Olson

Thank you for your valuable help in a timely manner.
—Marcie Frevert, H. D.7



Pie and Cookies

It was a good week to be at the Capitol in a food sense. House Human Resources Committee always celebrates the end of their regular meetings by sharing pie with legislators and advocates.

Pies are made by Lana Ross, the lobbyist for FaDSS. Cookies were distributed Capitol-wide by the Pella Tulip Court and we all know how wonderful Pella cookies and Dutch Letters are to enjoy.



Iowa Department of Human Services

The Mission of the Iowa Department of Human Services is to help individuals and families achieve safe, stable, self-sufficient, and healthy lives, thereby contributing to the economic growth of the state. We do this by keeping a customer focus, striving for excellence, sound stewardship of state resources, maximizing the use of federal funding and leveraging opportunities, and by working with our public and private partners to achieve results.

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